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**Making Way for Expansion, VMFA Announces Temporary Closures of
Select Galleries Beginning July 7**
African art, Indigenous American art and Pre-Columbian art galleries will close temporarily



Entrance to VMFA's African art galleries. Photograph by David Stover, © 2018 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, VA — To prepare for the largest expansion and renovation project in its history, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) announced that some of its art collections impacted by or adjacent to the construction area will be taken off view and select galleries will be temporarily closed. These gallery closures will begin July 7, 2025.

“There’s always something to see at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and most of the permanent collection will stay open. The museum will continue to be open 365 days a year, and our robust schedule of programs, events, performances and blockbuster exhibitions will continue while the museum is undergoing expansion and renovation,” said Director and CEO Alex Nyerger.

Beginning this fall, the site will be prepared for construction. Groundbreaking for the museum’s expansion and renovation project is expected to begin in spring 2026.

VMFA’s galleries currently displaying African art, Indigenous American art and Pre-Columbian art will be de-installed. However, select works from these collections will return to view starting in September 2025, in a gallery dedicated to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) program. Other galleries — including American, Ancient, East Asian, European, Photography, South Asian and 21st-century art — will also be available to visitors, as will a full slate of

high-profile special exhibitions. The acclaimed exhibition *Frida: Beyond the Myth* is currently on view at VMFA through September 28, 2025.

“Visitors to the museum can look forward to experiencing expanded and refreshed gallery spaces for showing more works of African, Indigenous American and Pre-Columbian art with the completion of VMFA’s expansion and renovation project,” said Artistic Director and Chief Curator Dr. Michael Taylor.

VMFA, one of the top ten comprehensive art museums in the U.S., currently comprises 718,831 square feet. The newly planned McGlothlin Wing II will comprise approximately 173,000 square feet of new gallery spaces for American and Indigenous American art (approximately 30,000 square feet), contemporary art (approximately 12,400 square feet), African art (approximately 8,600 square feet) and a special exhibition gallery suite (approximately 12,000 square feet). The new wing also will include a special events space that will seat 500 people, meeting rooms, and an additional café and bar.

The project will also renovate approximately 45,000 square feet of existing gallery space in the 1936, 1970 and 2010 wings, highlighted by approximately 5,500 square feet of new gallery space for photography and approximately 7,000 square feet for the Raysor Center for Works on Paper. Visitors can also look forward to expanded galleries for European art from Medieval to Impressionism.



African art on view at VMFA. Photograph by Sandra Sellars, © 2025 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

After the museum’s expansion and renovation, VMFA will have the second largest space for African art, the fourth largest space for American art and the fourth largest suite of galleries devoted to photography in the U.S.

Funded through public and private sources, the museum’s expansion and renovation project is expected to be complete by late 2028. As with any expansion and renovation project, designs and dates are subject to change.

As the expansion and renovation project progresses, updates can be found on the museum’s website at www.VMFA.museum.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, is one of the largest comprehensive art museums in the United States. VMFA, which opened in 1936, is a state agency and privately endowed educational institution. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret art, and to encourage the study of the arts. Through the Office of Statewide Partnerships Program, the museum offers curated exhibitions, arts-related audiovisual programs, symposia, lectures, conferences, and workshops by visual and performing artists. In addition to presenting a wide array of special exhibitions, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to experience a global collection of art that spans more than 6,000 years. VMFA’s permanent holdings encompass more than 50,000 artworks, including the largest public collection of Fabergé outside of Russia, the finest collection of Art Nouveau outside of Paris and one of the nation’s finest collections of American art. VMFA is also home to important collections of Chinese art, English silver, French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, British sporting and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened the James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Wing I after a transformative expansion, previously the largest in its history. A new expansion, the McGlothlin Wing II, is planned to open in 2028. Comprising more than 170,000 square feet, it will be the largest expansion in the museum’s history and will make VMFA the fourth largest comprehensive art museum in the United States.

Recently named the 11th best art museum in the U.S. by *The Washington Post*, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is the only art museum in the United States open 365 days a year with free general admission. For additional information, telephone (804) 340-1400 or visit www.VMFA.museum.

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